**When discussing phonics with your child’s teacher, or if you choose to research phonics online, you may come across some of the specialist terminology that is used in this method teaching reading. We have created this glossary of terms which will help you to understand the different parts of phonics that you child is being taught.**

**blend -** to draw individual sounds together to pronounce a word, e.g. s-n-a-p,

blended together, reads *snap*

**cluster -** two (or three) letters making two (or three) sounds, e.g. the first three

letters of ‘straight’ are a consonant cluster

**digraph -** two letters which together make one sound, e.g. *sh, ch, th,ph,ee, oa*

**grapheme -** a letter or a group of letters representing one sound, e.g. *sh, ch, igh,*

*ough* (as in ‘though’)

**grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) -** the relationship between sounds and the letters which represent those sounds

**Mnemonic -** a device for memorising and recalling something, such as a snake

shaped like the letter 'S'

**phonemes -** the phonological units of speech that make a difference to meaning.

Thus, the spoken word rope is comprised of three phonemes: /r/, /o/,

and /p/. It differs by only one phoneme from each of the spoken

words, *soap, rode* and *rip*

**phonemic awareness -** the insight that every spoken word can be conceived as a sequence of phonemes. Because phonemes are the units of sound that are represented by the letters of an alphabet, an awareness of phonemes is key to understanding the logic of the alphabetic principle and thus to the *learnability* of phonics and spelling

**phonics -** instructional practices that emphasise how spellings are related to

speech sounds in systematic ways

**phonological awareness -** a more inclusive term than phonemic awareness and refers to the general ability to attend to the sounds of language as distinct from its meaning. Phonemic awareness generally develops through other, less subtle levels of phonological awareness. Noticing similarities between words in their sounds, enjoying rhymes, counting syllables, and so forth are indications of such ‘metaphonological’ skill.

**segment -** (to split up a word into its individual phonemes in order to spell it, e.g.

the word ‘cat’ has three phonemes: /c/, /a/, /t/

**split digraph -** two letters, which work as a pair, split, to represent one sound, e.g. a-e as in *make* or i-e as in *site*

**VC,CVC,CCVC -** the abbreviations for vowel-consonant, consonant-vowel-consonant,

consonant-consonant-vowel-consonant, and are used to describe the

order of letters in words, e.g.*am, Sam, slam*